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TAGS: ECON ETRD TBIO EZ

SUBJECT: CZECH REPUBLIC: REPLY TO DEMARCHE ON BIOTECH VOTES
AT OCTOBER 19 MEETINGS: EUROPEAN UNION AGRICULTURE COUNCIL
AND STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH

REF: STATE 106819

¶11. (SBU) EconOff delivered reftel to Ministry of Agriculture Food Safety Division Head Petr Benes on October 15. Benes said that the Czech Republic intends to support renewal of previously approved maize varieties and to support approval of three new biotech maize varieties at the October 19 Standing Committee on Food Chain and Animal Health meeting. He said that he expects France, Italy, Germany, and possibly other large EU states to abstain from voting during this meeting, however, and anticipates that the remaining member states will not be able to form a qualified majority. Benes also said that the meeting's agenda is already set and will not include a discussion on the EU's zero-tolerance policy towards biotech.

Thompson-Jones